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DIVISION OF NEUROSCIENCES

April 24, 1974

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University Medical School
Stanford, CA 94305

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

h.s.

Enclosed is a copy of the talk on "Ethnic Weapons" that I presented earlier this month at the American Chemical Society meetings.

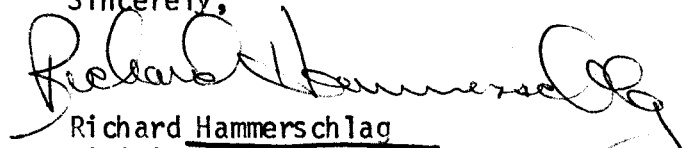
In light of my experiences in preparing the talk, and in sifting the varied responses to it from both colleagues and the media, I am left wondering what the analogous situation was like when the possibilities of biological warfare were first being realized. I imagine that in parallel to the present state of Human Genetics research, there was probably a good deal of optimism when large-scale systematic studies of infectious diseases first began, an optimism based on the hope of understanding and preventing bacterial and viral diseases with antibiotics and with immunization programs. However, at what point did the equally systematic studies leading to potential biological warfare agents begin, and how did our awareness come about that the military of various countries were actively engaged in biological warfare research and had the capability for biological warfare attack? Perhaps there is an historical account of these developments to which you could refer me.

I realize the analogy to ethnic or genetic warfare may not entirely be valid, but it still seems highly unlikely to me that following (or even preceding) the appearance of Larson's article, the military would not, at the least, have ordered a feasibility study of this additional area of chemical biological warfare.

The question was, and still remains, how to find out if the military is engaged in research along these lines.

Any comments you may have on the article would be appreciated.

Sincerely,


Richard Hammerschlag
Division of Neurosciences

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Enclosure

RH/mlc